



**Maine Department of Health and Human Services**

**FOOD SUPPLEMENT EMPLOYMENT AND TRAINING**

**PROGRAM**

**PROVIDER MANUAL**

**July 2019**



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# What is the Food Supplement Employment and Training Program?

## *Overview and Purpose:*

The purpose of this document is to describe the Maine Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) Food Supplement Employment and Training Program (FSET). The document is written for those employment and training providers who contract with the Maine DHHS to provide these services.

The United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) funds the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), which provides financial assistance to certain low-income families to purchase food. While the SNAP program is funded by the USDA, states administer SNAP programs. The USDA, as authorized by the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008, as amended in 2014, requires states to operate Employment and Training programs to assist SNAP recipients with gaining skills, training, education, and work experience that will help them find jobs to make their families more economically self-sufficient. USDA provides an annual allocation to states to administer these programs, and most states additionally fund some E&T services. States must submit an annual plan that details how they will operate their E&T programs. USDA requires states to operate E&T to the specifications and standards in the SNAP Employment and Training Toolkit (at: [https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/ET\\_Toolkit\\_2013.pdf](https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/ET_Toolkit_2013.pdf)).

In Maine, the SNAP program is called the Food Supplement Program. Maine's employment and training program is called the Food Supplement Employment and Training Program, or FSET. The FSET Program is administered by the State of Maine Department of Health and Human Services, Office for Family Independence. Maine DHHS uses state purchasing guidelines to contract with providers of FSET services.

Through FSET partnership, employment and training providers contracted with the Maine DHHS assist low-income Maine residents to participate in employment and training services with the goal of self-sustaining employment. The FSET program is voluntary for participants and is intended to provide funding for job training and post-secondary education to accelerate achievement of employment and independence from Maine's public assistance services.

Food Supplement recipients who are currently enrolled in the federally funded SNAP (Food Supplement) Program, are seeking full-time employment, and are not TANF recipients are eligible for services through the FSET program. The primary target population is identified as Food Supplement recipients who are subject to federal SNAP work requirements, including Able Bodied Adults without Dependents (ABAWDs) or Work Registrants.

The Food Supplement Program meets federal requirements of its funding agency, USDA, and requires all providers to protect the civil rights of its recipients. All vendors must assert they will meet the federal civil rights protections for all participants.

## DEFINITIONS- What do these terms mean?

Here is a list of commonly used terms and acronyms in this document.

ABAWD	An ABAWD is a Food Supplement Work Registrant between the ages of 18-49 who is physically and mentally able to work twenty or more hours a week, has no children under the age of eighteen in the benefit household, and has no federally defined exemptions from work requirements, and defined in the Maine Food Supplement Manual (Chapter 301). ABAWDs are subject to time limited benefits when they do not meet work requirements.
BES	Bureau of Employment Services with Maine’s Department of Labor
CareerCenter	Maine’s One Stop workforce development locations and service providers
CSSP	Competitive Skills Scholarship Program, established in Maine Statute: <a href="http://www.mainelegislature.org/ros/LOM/LOM123rd/PUBLIC352_ptA.asp">http://www.mainelegislature.org/ros/LOM/LOM123rd/PUBLIC352_ptA.asp</a> . The CSSP program is in Maine DOL rules at 12-597, Chap. 2 at: <a href="http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/rules/12/chaps12.htm">http://www.maine.gov/sos/cec/rules/12/chaps12.htm</a> .
DHHS	Maine Department of Health and Human Services
DOL	Maine Department of Labor
FNS	Food and Nutrition Service, a branch of USDA
FS	Food Supplement program (SNAP), defined in 10-144, Chapter 301, Maine Food Supplement Program Certification Manual
FSET	Food Supplement Employment and Training
IEP	An Individualized Employment Plan (IEP) is a written plan (referred to as an IEP) that must be developed by FSET Providers that assesses skills, interests, and aptitudes of the participant, and identifies the specific services and supports necessary for the FSET participant to achieve employment goals stated in the Plan.
OFI	Office for Family Independence, Maine Department of Health and Human Services
Participant	An eligible recipient who has enrolled in the FSET program
Plan	Employment and Training Plan submitted annually to and approved by USDA-FNS, which outlines approved services to be delivered Maine DHHS FSET providers under the Food Supplement Employment and Training plan (referred to as “The Plan.”)
Recipient	A Food Supplement recipient who is currently eligible for and receiving Food Supplement benefits.

SNAP	Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – federal program for low income individuals, also known as “Food Supplement” or “Food Stamp” program.
TOOLKIT	Employment and Training Toolkit, published by USDA SNAP program, to help states create and implement E&T programs, hereinafter referred to as “The Toolkit”, and serving as guidance and standards for services to be delivered. The toolkit is at: <a href="http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/ET_Toolkit_2013.pdf">http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/ET_Toolkit_2013.pdf</a>
USDA	United States Department of Agriculture – oversight agency of the federal SNAP program.
WIOA	The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act was signed into law on July 22, 2014. This legislation, serving as a reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act, directed the workforce system to develop regional plans in conjunction with Adult Education and Vocational Rehabilitation, and develop industry cluster initiatives as an integral part of regional activities.
Registrant	A Work Registrant is a Food Supplement enrolled recipient between the ages of 16 through 59 who is physically and mentally able to work thirty or more hours a week, has no children under the age of six in the benefit household, and has no federally defined exemptions from work requirements, and defined in the Maine Food Supplement Manual (Chapter 301).

## What Services Can Be Provided Through FSET?

This section overviews employment and training services Maine FSET program will contract for with its FSET vendors. Maine DHHS intends to deliver a full array of employment and training opportunities for its Food Supplement recipients. Service components are federally defined as: job search training, job search, workfare, work experience, education services, and job retention components. These service components as outlined in *USDA Employment and Training Toolkit*: [https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/ET\\_Toolkit\\_2013.pdf](https://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/ET_Toolkit_2013.pdf).

Maine DHHS requires all contracted providers to deliver services within standards that meet these federal guidelines. All services must be coordinated by FSET providers in collaboration with other educational or WIOA providers to assure no duplication for co-enrolled participants. FSET providers **must** provide case management for recipients while enrolled in all FSET components.

Before providing services, Providers must assess the needs of applicants and develop an Individualized Employment Plan (IEP). Prior to development of an Individualized Employment Plan, the agency must assess the skills, interests, and aptitude of the FSET participant to assure that the proposed services are a good fit for the FSET participant and that the proposed plan realistically leads the participant to a well-paying job. Providers should use a standardized assessment form and process that will be approved by the Department. The Department encourages selection of accelerated employment and training programming that is realistic for FSET participants to be able to commit to.

The FSET components that may be provided if included in the Provider contract are as follows:

**Job Search Training** will typically initiate FSET participation. Necessary services will be identified and provided to include interview workshops, resume writing, and Maine JobLink registration to apply for jobs online. Some participants may require more intensive services to help them become work ready, including time management, budgeting, or assistance with transportation to work successfully. Participants will also be referred to WIOA providers whenever appropriate. An important part of job search training is the individual assessment that occurs during this phase. The goal of this component is for participants to successfully secure employment.

Providers will complete assessments that include creation of a job search plan, setting goals, action steps and objectives to meet goals. Providers will also deliver on-going support to include assistance during job search and post attainment.

**Job Search** is the component that encourages job ready participants to make a pre-determined number of inquiries to prospective employers over a specified period of time. The Job Search component must be supervised though job search may occur independently or within a group setting.

**Workfare and Work Experience** may include a variety of unique training and work “earn while you learn” opportunities. While workfare and work experience are very similar, they are referred to in this plan using federal guidelines from the *Employment and Training Toolkit*, which identify

workfare as being performed in public or non-profit agencies and work experience as being performed in for-profit companies. Both workfare and work experience have the primary goal of developing work skills and employability of recipients.

Workfare and work experience may also allow ABAWDs to perform activities countable toward their work requirement at community-based agencies or work experience in a for-profit agency to gain work skills that improve employability.

**Education**- FSET funds an educational component that improves employability both through basic education leading to a high school diploma or basic skills (English as a second language or other basic courses), specific job training and/or certification, and also by supporting post-secondary education for specific high skilled jobs.

Maine FSET also can reimburse post-secondary educational activities such as short-term vocational training, certification programs, and two-year degrees in programs that have direct links to employment. Maine FSET does not support funding for degrees beyond an Associate's degree. Food Supplement recipients who enroll in post-secondary education through an FSET provider may more easily meet federal SNAP eligibility guidelines pertaining to college enrollment.

Such programs include Adult Basic Education (ABE), basic literacy, English as a Second Language (ESL), and high school equivalency (GED) can be reimbursed when the services are not available to the participant in other free community programs.

**Job Retention** services can be reimbursed for a minimum of 30 days and up to 90 days following participation in FSET and attainment of a job through that FSET participation. This component allows case management services and some financial support for equipment, tools, uniforms, and transportation for participants who attained a job while participating in FSET.

ABAWDs subject to time limited benefits and additional work requirements are limited to a maximum of two hours per week of job retention services when counting such services toward ABAWD work requirements. Thus, an ABAWD would have to work an average of 18 hours per week concurrently in combination with two hours of job retention services to meet ABAWD work requirements. This does not apply to ABAWDs who are exempted from work requirements.

FSET participants who have been previously Food Supplement enrolled and who attained employment through their FSET participation are eligible for Job Retention services for up to 90 days even if they lose Food Supplement benefits due to no longer being financially eligible. Job Retention is the only component that may be delivered to individuals who lose Food Supplement eligibility due to excess income when the employment is attained through FSET participation.

**Support Services** are intended to remove barriers for FSET participants, and may include financial assistance for transportation, childcare, books, tools, equipment, and work clothing.

Maine FSET reimburses federally allowable support services at a 50% reimbursement rate if the supports are necessary for the specific employment and training provided, addressed in the IEP, and do not exceed annual caps in the Provider contract. All support services must be approved

prior to purchase, and the approved costs can only be reimbursed directly to the contracted FSET vendor. Support services cannot include stipends; most living expenses; or services for recipients receiving TANF cash benefit.

The following support services are examples of supports reimbursable in current contracts:

<b>Support Items That Can be Reimbursed with Prior Approval:</b>	<b>Maximum Amount Reimbursed (cap) Per Participant Per Federal Fiscal Year</b>
Tuition and All Other Supports (except childcare)	\$6000 per year for full-time students and \$3000 for part-time students, after all other scholarships and grants are exhausted
<b><u>Specific Caps for All Other Supports</u></b>	
Dependent Care	Childcare rates may not exceed the rates set by the Maine Childcare Subsidy Program (CCSP) at: <a href="http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/ec/occhs/provider-subsidy.htm">http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/ocfs/ec/occhs/provider-subsidy.htm</a> . Recipients must apply for CCSP funding, and child care will only be reimbursed when CCSP is not available.
Transportation	Mileage up to .44\$ per mile and other modes of public transportation, limited to sixty (60) miles from FSET location. Transportation must be reimbursed in the most economic manner feasible. Providers may use .44 per mile to calculate distribution of gas cards.
Eyecare*	\$200
Dental Care*	\$500
Books and Supplies	\$2000 per year
Uniforms, Tools, Equipment, work clothing, and automobile repair	\$1000 per year

\*If no other insurance is available to cover.

A guide of generally reimbursable items is available in the SNAP E&T Toolkit, though approval is still required by OFI.

The toolkit is at: [https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/ET\\_Toolkit\\_2013.pdf](https://fns-prod.azureedge.net/sites/default/files/ET_Toolkit_2013.pdf), and allowable items are detailed starting on Page 55 of the Toolkit.

**Case Management-** FSET providers must provide on-going case management when providing any of the above service components. The primary purpose of case management is to monitor the participant's progress and provide necessary support to reach Plan goals. Maine DHHS requires that case management be provided at minimum on a monthly basis. Expected documentation includes notes on progress towards Plan goals, changes in Plan, reimbursement (along with proper documentation such as receipts), job search logs, and progress notes. If a participant withdraws from FSET services or if no contact can be made in two months, the FSET participant is discharged from FSET programming. All of this information must be kept in the Participant's case file and be made available to the Maine DHHS in the frequency noted in the contract and upon request.

## **What are federal SNAP Work Requirements?**

The SNAP program has federal work requirements that are identified in the federal code of regulations at 7 C.F.R. § 273.7. These work requirements include registering for work, not voluntarily quitting a job or reducing hours, taking a job if offered, and participating in employment and training programs if assigned by the State.

Some groups are exempt from these work requirements. They include children, seniors, pregnant women, and people who have physical or mental health conditions resulting in disability that impacts the ability to work.

## **What is a Work Registrant?**

People between the ages of 16 through age 59 who do not fit within an exemption must meet federal work requirements in order to be eligible for SNAP. These individuals are required to be "registered" for work annually, and they are often referred to as "work registrants." Recipients who have children under age six in the benefit household, have a disability, care for a disabled adult, or are subject to other work requirements (such as TANF) are exempt from work registration. The Department expects Providers to assist their FSET participants with meeting federal work requirements, since failure to comply with work requirements can result in disqualification from the Food Supplement Program.

## **What is an ABAWD?**

In addition to these general work requirements, a subset of this "work registrant" population includes able bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDS). ABAWDs are individuals between the ages of 18 through 49, who are required to work or participate in a work program for at least 20 hours per week in order to receive SNAP benefits for more than 3 months in a 36-month period. (The current 36-month period runs from October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2020). requirements are found in 7 C.F.R. § 273.24.

In Maine, ABAWDS are identified through the eligibility system and notified about these work requirements. ABAWDS must either meet the work requirement through employment or volunteering (self-initiated workfare). ABAWDS who believe they should be exempted from work requirements due to disability or who have questions about documenting their hours worked or volunteered must contact an OFI eligibility specialist at 1-855-797-4357.

## **Who is eligible for FSET Services?**

Individuals must be currently enrolled in the Maine Food Supplement program to be eligible for FSET, with the exception of job retention services as defined above. Current enrollment must be verified by OFI staff after a Release of Information Consent form is signed by the applicant. Because FSET funding is provided to help SNAP recipients meet federal work requirements, Food Supplement Employment and Training participants should also be registered as either “Work Registrants” or “ABAWDs” in the Food Supplement program, which also can be confirmed by OFI after a Consent Form has been received for the FSET applicant. In some limited cases, other Food Supplement recipients who are not identified as Work Registrants or ABAWDS may be enrolled, if other funding sources such as TANF, Vocational Rehabilitation, or WIOA is not available, and if the FSET plan realistically will lead to employment and less dependence on SNAP benefits.

Maine Food Supplement recipients who are enrolled in TANF and subject to TANF work requirements are not eligible for FSET, as they are subject to work requirements of the TANF program and must work with the Department’s Break the Cycle vendor (currently Fedcap). Because funds are received from USDA-Food and Nutrition Service, only those Food Supplement recipients open on the federal SNAP benefit are eligible. Maine Food Supplement recipients who receive the state-funded Food Supplement benefit are not eligible for FSET, which is federally funded.

### **In Summary: To qualify for FSET, participants must:**

- a. Be enrolled in the federally funded Maine Food Supplement Program (with exception of job retention services defined above);
- b. Not be receiving TANF cash benefit;
- c. Be at least 16 years old
- d. Live in Maine;
- e. Be legally eligible to work in the U.S;
- f. Be seeking education or training for a job that will lead to self-sufficiency measured by decrease of need for public benefits. The Department encourages providers to select training that leads to high-wage in-demand occupations, as identified on the

Maine Department of Labor website, and that have an average wage at or above the average wage for all occupations in Maine;

- g. Not have a marketable post-secondary degree, as determined by the Department; and
- h. Have the ability to undertake and complete the education or training program, as assessed by FSET Providers.

## **Which Agencies Can Provide FSET Services and how do Providers enroll?**

Community agencies, post-secondary educational institutions, employers, and other entities with Maine locations that have expertise in providing employment and training services may request to be assessed as a Qualified Vendor of FSET services with the State of Maine Department of Health and Human Services. Potential vendors must be approved by both the Department and by USDA-Food and Nutrition Services. Potential vendors must have a contract executed with the Department before FSET services are provided or reimbursed. FSET providers must also meet qualifications detailed below, which includes having non-federal funds available to meet 50% of their employment and training service costs.

Providers who are interested in becoming a FSET Provider should contact the Maine DHHS OFI:

Patricia Dushuttle, Special Projects Manager  
Maine Department of Health and Human Services,  
Office for Family Independence  
11 SHS, 109 Capitol Street  
Augusta, Maine 04333-0011  
(207) 624-6907  
[Patricia.Dushuttle@maine.gov](mailto:Patricia.Dushuttle@maine.gov)

The Department has a Qualified Vendor application process that allows potential FSET vendors to complete an application and Agency Assessment. The OFI then assesses the application, and if justified, may recommend that the Department enter into a contract with the FSET vendor. All contracts must be approved according to State purchasing guidelines before services are provided. All services are also subject to approval of the services in the annual Food Supplement Employment and Training plan and the availability of state (as applicable) and federal funding.

## **What are the Qualifications of a FSET Provider?**

The Department encourages employment and training providers to contact the Department to discuss enrolling as a FSET provider. FSET providers will be required to have an accessible space available to serve the public and sufficient staff resources to provide services to its target

population. The Department intends to contract with FSET Providers who deliver high quality employment and training services leading to increased employment opportunities for Food Supplement recipients focused on employer recognized credentials and career pathways.

FSET providers must be able to clearly demonstrate their ability, experience, and success in the following areas:

1. Conducting employment and training services at standards identified in the Toolkit at: [http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/ET\\_Toolkit\\_2013.pdf](http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/ET_Toolkit_2013.pdf);
2. Knowledge of the Federal Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA), to maximize opportunities through WIOA and to provide services at a comparable standard;
3. Knowledge of Maine’s WIOA plan and ability to work within expectations of the plan;
4. Ability to comprehensively assess the training needs of FSET applicants;
5. Capacity and understanding of how to serve the target population of low-income SNAP recipients;
6. Delivery of culturally competent services;
7. Ability to perform all required administrative tasks, including tracking, reporting, billing, recruitment, and collaborative functions;
8. Ability to coordinate and work collaboratively with other community providers, state and federal government;
9. Ability to identify and measure program effectiveness by developing and targeting outcome measures as required by the federal E&T program; and
10. Demonstrated ability to obtain required non-federal funds for 50% of E&T funding.

## **How do FSET Providers bill for FSET services?**

The Department must execute a contract with FSET providers for the agency to be reimbursed. The contract will identify specific procedures for invoices and specifically what is to be reimbursed. Once a contract is in place, vendors must invoice on a monthly basis for services provided to eligible FSET participants. Invoices must properly identify what services and supports were provided to each eligible participant. Support services must be approved by the Department to assure eligibility and that caps are not exceeded. Receipts for support services are required documentation.

Generally, The OFI will contract with employment and training providers who are eligible for funding through “Third Party Reimbursement model,” that can reimburse 50% of allowable costs that providers expend using allowable non-federal funding. Qualifying non-federal funds can come from local government, non-profit entities, institutions of higher education, foundations or other eligible community-based organization that qualify for allowable federal SNAP reimbursement pursuant to the federal “Food and Nutrition Act of 2008,” Pub. L 110—246 (7 U.S.C. S2011 et seq.)

No State dollars are provided through the awarded contracts.

## **What Other Employment and Training Opportunities are Available in Maine?**

There are other employment and training opportunities available in Maine that must be identified and coordinated to the extent possible to assure that there is no duplication of services. Maine requires FSET providers to collaborate with WIOA and Vocational Rehabilitation and TANF providers to most efficiently use SNAP E&T funding and to assure no duplication or supplantation of services.

If Food Supplement recipients also receive a TANF cash benefit, they are not eligible for FSET services, since most TANF recipients are required to work with the state’s ASPIRE provider, Fedcap.

Here is a partial list of other employment and training opportunities that are available to low-income residents in Maine and should be also discussed with potential clients:

### **Workforce Investment Opportunity Act (WIOA) Providers:**

WIOA is designed to help job seekers access employment, education, training, and support services to succeed in the labor market and to match employers with the skilled workers they need. WIOA brings together, in strategic coordination, the core programs of Federal investment in skill development:

- Employment and training services for adults, dislocated workers, and youth and Wagner-Peyser employment services administered by the Department of Labor (DOL) through formula grants to states; and
- Adult education and literacy programs and Vocational Rehabilitation state grant programs that assist individuals with disabilities in obtaining employment administered by the Department of Education (DoED).
- Clients can be assessed for eligibility for WIOA by going to one of the CareerCenters in Maine for referral to the designated WIOA provider, or by going directly to the WIOA provider designated in the area of the state in which the client resides.

## **Competitive Skills Scholarship Program:**

The Competitive Skills Scholarship is an additional source of funding that reimburses expenses often not covered by other educational grant and loan programs, including tuition and fees and supports including: child care, transportation, books, supplies, equipment, remedial and pre-requisite training. The Competitive Skills Scholarship reimburses several different education and training options, including certificate programs and two-year and four-year degrees. Educational and training programs must be directly linked to an approved list of occupations that are higher wage and in demand.

The list of approved training programs includes those two year and less programs at: <http://www.mainecareercenter.com/services-programs/training/cssp/occupations/index.shtml>

Participants in CSSP must (1) be at least 18 years old, (2) live in Maine, (3) be legally eligible to work in the U.S., (4) be seeking education or training for a job in a high wage, in demand occupation, (5) not have a marketable post-secondary degree, (6) have a household income of less than 135% of the federal poverty level (or for FSET-CSSP, be enrolled in SNAP, if in a Food Supplement funded slot), and (7) have the ability to undertake and complete the education or training program (as determined by assessment).

Applicants can apply for CSSP scholarships at Maine CareerCenters. CSSP funds may be allowable for third party reimbursement.

## **CareerCenters**

Maine CareerCenters provide a variety of employment and training services at no charge for Maine workers and businesses. There are CareerCenter locations throughout the state, and the addresses are available at: <http://www.mainecareercenter.gov/locations/index.shtml>.

## **Performance Measures that FSET Providers Must Report to OFI**

The Department requires FSET providers to submit status reports and performance measures to OFI, so that federal reporting requirements can be met. This information is crucial to see how effective E&T services are for DHHS clients.

### Status Reports:

OFI requires FSET providers to submit a monthly roster of FSET participants so that status in programming and continued Food Supplement benefits can be confirmed. In addition, FSET providers must report any changes in participation and/or employment status, and change in income to OFI. Monthly billing requires submission of the roster and documentation of all participant supports reimbursed and billed for in the month.

### Performance Measures:

In addition to other state reporting requirements, the federal SNAP E&T program requires providers to develop, track and report federally defined standards that are like those required by WIOA. These standards are identified at 7 C.F.R. § 273.7 and include the following:

- The number and percentage of E&T participants and former participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after completion of participation in E&T;
- The number and percentage of E&T participants and former participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the fourth quarter after completion of participation in E&T;
- The median quarterly earnings of all the E&T participants and former participants who are in unsubsidized employment during the second quarter after completion of participation in E&T;
- The number and percentage of participants that completed a training, educational, work experience or an on-the-job training component;
- The number of all E&T participants who:
  - a. Are voluntary or mandatory participants;
  - b. Have received a high school degree (or GED) prior to being provided with E&T services;
  - c. Are able-bodied adults without dependents (ABAWDs);
  - d. Speak English as a second language;
  - e. Are male or female;
  - f. Are within each of the following age ranges: 16-17, 18-35, 36-49, 50-59, 60 or older.

## **How do FSET Providers Enroll Participants?**

Applicants must first be confirmed as FSET eligible before being assessed for FSET participation and enrolled in programming.

Applicants for FSET must complete eligibility verification and participate in a comprehensive assessment conducted by the FSET Provider to determine their potential to succeed in the education and training program. Enrollment for post-secondary degree programs may also require additional eligibility requirements as determined by the institution providing services.

Individual training and support service needs must be identified and incorporated into a written Individual Employment Plan (IEP) developed by the FSET Provider.

**Here are the steps to follow to enroll a Participant:**

**Step 1: CONFIRM FSET ELIGIBILITY:**

1. Complete **Release of Information Consent Form** with the individual and email and submit to the OFI contact person. Note that client specific emails must be encrypted to ensure confidentiality.
2. Along with the Release of Information, ask the OFI FSET Program to confirm the individual is open on Food Supplement and eligible for FSET services.
3. Ask the OFI FSET Program to confirm whether or not the individual is an ABAWD, which results in additional work requirements for the individual and tighter timelines in which to serve the individual.
4. Confirm the individual is not receiving a TANF cash benefit and therefore subject to TANF work requirements that make them ineligible for FSET.

**Step 2: ASSESS THE INDIVIDUAL**

1. Complete the OFI INITIAL SCREENING FORM provided by OFI FSET staff. Keep in mind that this is not the only assessment your agency should do. This is initial screening information required by OFI to determine if the individual is eligible for FSET assessment and services.
2. Complete assessments using the assessment tools your agency uses and has been approved by OFI. Agencies use a variety of comprehensive assessment tools, many of which are standardized, to assess the needs, skills, and strengths of their participants. This assessment must be kept on file at your agency for each FSET participant and sent upon request. FSET providers must include the following as part of the assessment: basic skills, aptitude, career goals and interests, employment history, education level, barriers, and support needs.

**Step 3: DEVELOP AN EDUCATION AND TRAINING PLAN**

Based on the assessment and, if the client is deemed appropriate for further services by the agency, develop an Individual Education and Training Plan. The training Plan is developed after assessment is completed. The Plan must include career goals, skills, abilities, referrals to other providers, and any other job-related factors that need to be considered to meet the goals of the plan. Plans must be updated as appropriate to reflect current status and changes.

This Plan must be kept on file at your agency for each FSET participant and sent upon request. The FSET Program may this Plan with you to assure that all proposed services are appropriate and allowable.